DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 230 927 CS 207 543

AUTHOR Fico, Frederick
TITLE Statehouse Reporters in Indiana: Influences on News Source Use.
PUB DATE Aug 83
NOTE 28p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (66th, Corvallis, OR, August 6-9, 1983).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC 2 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Attitudes; Content Analysis; Decision Making; Influences; *Information Sources; *Legislators; *Media Research; *News Reporting; *Role Perception; Self Concept; State Government
IDENTIFIERS Editors; Indiana; *Media Role; State Legislatures

ABSTRACT

Reporters' perceived concern for their editors' news priorities and their own role self-concepts were examined for their effects on how reporters covering the Indiana State Assembly used diverse sources of information. Subjects, 34 reporters and 39 state senators, were surveyed concerning their contacts with each other during the 1982 legislative session. Approximately 300 stories about the session were also analyzed to assess the outcomes of those interactions. The findings indicated that perceived concern for editors' priorities was a more important influence on source diversity than reporter role self-concept. Reporters who perceived that their editors had definite concerns about their stories used a wider variety of sources than did those who did not have such concerns. Further, reporters who perceived that editors were concerned with stories stressing interpretation and initiative used a greater diversity of sources than did those who perceived only that editors were concerned with story timeliness and quantity. Experience and type of medium also influenced how widely or narrowly reporters searched for information sources. Broadcast reporters used a narrower range of source than did their print colleagues. Among experienced reporters, perceived editorial concern with serving audience led to a wider variety of source use and a greater diversity of images in the resulting stories. (Author/FL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED230937

STATEHOUSE REPORTERS IN INDIANA:

INFLUENCES ON NEWS SOURCE USE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Frederick Fico

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

By

Frederick Fico
Assistant Professor
School of Journalism
Michigan State University

A paper presented before the Communication Theory and Methodology Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication at the annual convention Aug. 6-9 at Oregon State University, Corvallis.

CS 207 543

ABSTRACT: Statehouse Reporters In Indiana: Influences on News Source Use

Perceived editorial concern and role self-concept are examined for their effects on how diversely statehouse reporters use sources to cover the Indiana General Assembly. Thirty-four reporters and 39 state senators were surveyed on their contacts with one another during the 1982 legislative session. About 300 legislative stories were content analyzed to assess the newsmaking outcomes of those interactions.

The study indicates that perceived editorial concern is a more important influence on source diversity than reporter role self-concept. Reporters who perceive that editors have definite concerns about their stories use a wider variety of sources than do reporters who fail to perceive such concerns. Further, reporters who perceive that editors are concerned with stories stressing interpretation and initiative use a greater diversity of sources than do reporters who perceive only that editors are concerned with story timeliness and quantity.

Experience and type of medium also influence how widely or narrowly reporters search for information sources. Reporter experience is strongly related to both perceived autonomy from editorial influence and to concentration on a narrow range of institutional leaders. Broadcast reporters use a narrower range of sources than do their print colleagues. Among experienced statehouse bureau print reporters, however, perceived editorial concern with serving audiences leads to a wider variety of source use and a greater diversity of images in the resulting stories.

The author will send copies of the paper upon request:

Frederick Fico
Assistant Professor
School of Journalism
Communication Arts Building
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Mich. 48824

The way reporters search for sources of information is obviously crucial to how well the stories they produce can serve audiences. Governmental leaders are usually the most important sources of information for most public affairs reporters (Cater, 1959; Cohen, 1963; Matthews, 1967; Chittick, 1970; Sigal, 1973; Tuchman, 1978; Gans, 1979).

This study explores reporter qualities associated with greater or lesser interaction with such leaders and other sources. Specifically, the effects of reporter perception of news organization priorities, and reporter role self-concept, are examined in a state legislative setting.

Dimmick and Coit (1982) in their discussion of levels of analysis in mass media decision making note that organizational-level influence is exercised by editors over reporters by virtue of their authority positions. Reporters also may have a greater or lesser degree of individual-level autonomy in making news decisions.

While Dimmick and Coit focused on factors producing greater or lesser autonomy for reporters, their general analytical perspective can also be used to examine reporter dependence on particular types of sources. They emphasize, for instance, that influence over news decision making can be exercised through the control of some vital resource. Sources can influence stories by providing or withholding information.

Reporters, then, may be the focus of potentially conflicting influences. How much influence sources can have may well vary with editorial influence perceived by reporters. Further, reporters

may have their own ideas of what they should be doing, ideas embodied in the journalistic roles they subscribe to. Differences among reporters in perceived editorial concerns and role self-concepts could result in different patterns of reliance on sources.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The powerful "socializing" influence of editors on the work of newsroom reporters was explored by Breed (1955). Since then, researchers such as Sigal (1973), Epstein (1973), Gans (1979) and Tuchman (1978) have explored how organizational routines affect news production. Sigal suggests that news is in part the outcome of bureaucratic bargaining within the news organization as editors and their reporters press for Page One story position. This in turn entails reporter relationships with sources seeking publicity to enhance policy support within their bureaucracies. Epstein in his study of network broadcasting emphasizes that the logistics of timing and transmission require focusing on authoritative figures recognizable to a broad audience. Gans suggests that news organization need for "efficiency" requires that reporters monitor governmental leaders and bureaucracies. Tuchman emphasizes that the very definition of news emerges from such dependence.

Reporters in many studies have been subject to the direct observation and control of editors or managerial personnel. Relatively less attention, however, has been given to the effects of different kinds of editorial influence perceived by reporters assigned to beats physically removed from the newsroom. Further, there is no

reason to assume that editors are all alike in their demands on reporters. It seems plausible that reporters who perceive editorial support for stories that reflect a concern for the audience will use sources differently from reporters whose editors put greater stress on meeting newsroom production needs.

Indeed, Dunwoody (1978) in a study of science convention coverage found that editorial constraints in the form of deadlines, equipment needs, and injunctions to produce stories daily made reporters dependent on the "control" structure of the science organization. But Torgerson (1974) in a study of Iowa legislative reporters found that perceived editorial concern for audiences and for news production needs both motivated reporters to "dig" for information sources, in contrast to passive "reaction reporting" by reporters relatively lower in such perceptions of editorial concerns.

Further, the source searching behavior of reporters also may be affected at the individual level by their own conception of what they should be doing. Dunn (1969) in his study of Wisconsin statehouse reporters found four types of reporters distinguished by role "self-concept," which he defined as the "overarching purpose" reporters saw in their work. In Wisconsin, Dunn found "neutrals," "translators," "representatives," and "participants." Johnstone and his associates (1976) in a national survey of journalists found "neutrals" and "participants" distinguished by commitment to "objective" or "advocacy" type of reporting values. In his Iowa study Torgerson concluded that most of the reporters subscribed to most of the roles

described by Dunn. He suggests that strength of role holding, rather than the particular role subscribed to, could make a more important difference in reporter performance.

This study thus attempts to analyze reporter reliance on sources as this reliance is affected by variables operating at different levels. Reporter role self-concept -- an individual-level variable -- and perceived editorial concern -- an organizational one -- are the focus of this study. Individual-level reporter experience and super-organizational medium type are used as controls in this analysis.

HYPOTHESES

Four hypotheses probing the effects on source use of reporter role self-concept and perceived editorial concern are tested in this paper. Two interaction hypotheses deal with the basic use of different types of sources by reporters characterized by different perceived editorial concerns and role self-concepts. Two story hypotheses test differences in story portrayals associated with these different reporter characteristics.

Interaction Hypotheses

1. Reporters who perceive an editorial concern for audiences will use more diverse sources than reporters who perceive an editorial concern for newsroom production mechanics.

2. Reporters who strongly subscribe to some role self-concept will use more diverse sources than reporters who only weakly subscribe to roles.

Story Hypotheses

1. Reporters who perceive an editorial concern for audiences will incorporate more diverse portrayals in stories than will reporters who perceive an editorial concern for newsroom mechanics.

2. Reporters who strongly subscribe to some role self-concept will incorporate more diverse portrayals in stories than will reporters who only weakly subscribe to roles.

These hypotheses proceed from the assumption that the overall tendency of media organizations is to give greatest access to institutional leaders and to established institutional operations. It seems plausible, however, that not all editorial influence results in institutional source dependence. More specifically, it seems reasonable that reporters who think that their editors are concerned with stories reflecting clarity, interpretation and initiative will search for information more widely, and will incorporate to some extent in stories the more diverse perspectives they have encountered. Similarly, reporters who possess some role self-concept, of whatever type, should be more concerned about a thorough reporting job than those who have less a personal sense of what they are trying to accomplish.

Conversely, reporters who perceive that editors want only copy that is timely, predictable and sufficient, and reporters possessing only a weak internal role motivation, will probably take sources close to hand. Stories probably will reflect more limited perspectives. And in particular, it is plausible to expect that these reporters will be more dependent on "institutional" or official sources who occupy positions of power that more easily and frequently generate news.

METHODOLOGY

No one research methodology can capture the complexity and diversity of reporter-source relationships. Certainly reporters must be asked about how they search for information. But information supplied by sources about reporter contacts is vital for estimating more accurately the scope of that search. Content analysis, used alone, cannot fully reflect this search or how sources facilitate it. But survey and content data together can show both how reporters search sources and how reporters cite them in stories for audiences.

This study thus uses a multi-method approach to analyze influences governing the interaction of statehouse reporters and state senators during the 1982 session of the Indiana General Assembly. Thirty-four reporters -- virtually the universe of Indiana legislative reporters -- were asked about their use of senator sources, about their work routines, and about their personal reporting goals.[1] Thirty-nine of the 50 state senators provided information about their contacts with reporters during the session.[2] Nearly 300 stories about the session from 16 newspapers and the two wire services were content analyzed to determine what kinds of sources were used in stories and what images of legislative activity they incorporated.[3] Informal participant observation and in-depth followup interviews with important legislators and reporters were also conducted.

The pattern of reporter reliance on institutional leaders is the ultimate dependent variable in this research. Reporter survey items were used to create Guttman scales for perceived editorial concern

and role self-concept.[4] Using these scales, individual reporters were classified into groups to test the influence of these characteristics on interaction.[5]

Four mutually exclusive groups of reporters could be created on the basis of perceived editorial concern. Of the 33 reporters who could be classified, nine, or 27 percent, perceived their editors as wanting newsroom mechanics priorities such as timeliness or a set quantity of copy daily. Seven reporters, or 21 percent, thought their editors wanted stories emphasizing concern for audience understanding and exclusives. Four of the reporters, or 12 percent, perceived their editors as wanting <u>both</u> mechanics and audience concern story criteria. Thirteen reporters, nearly 40 percent, did not think their editors especially wanted either newsroom mechanics or audience concern story characteristics. This last group is thus the most "autonomous" in their news decision making.

Three mutually exclusive reporter groups could be created on the basis of role self-concept subscribed to by the 33 reporters. Four reporters, or 12 percent, could be classified as neutrals who emphasize objectivity. The most common role was the translator, with nine, or 27 percent, of the respondents. Eleven reporters, or 33 percent, did not score high enough on any role scale to be classified, and thus constitute a "weak role" reporter group. A single reporter each subscribed to the representative and participant roles. The remaining reporters subscribed to some combination of roles.[6]

Concepts provided by Zwier (1979) and Fenno (1973) in their studies of U.S. congressmen were used to classify Indiana senators into

groups on the basis of responses to questions probing their legislative and political priorities.[7] Eight senators, or 21 percent, could be classified as committee "specialists" on the basis of committee position and commitment to committee work. Five senators, or 13 percent, could be classified as "influence oriented" non-specialists on the basis of formal legislative position and commitment to leadership tasks. Ten senators, about 25 percent of the respondents, could be classified as "policy oriented" non specialists on the basis of strictly legislative enactment priorities. Half of these respondents, however, also had election orientations. Four senators, about 10 percent of the respondents, could be classified as purely election oriented on the basis of election priorities. Finally, twelve senators, or just under a third of the respondents, could not be classified in terms of the specialization or political goal orientation categories, and thus constitute a "non-typed" group.

Information from the two surveys and the sampled news stories was pooled to analyze more completely how reporters used senators to cover the 1982 legislative session. Interaction was measured using two dependent variable measures: the frequencies at which reporters and senators indicated they interacted, and the proportionate reliance on each senator type by each reporter group. As an additional "check," the Guttman scales used to create the reporter groups were correlated with reporter self-estimates of reliance on a variety of activity, print, background and administrative sources for covering the session.[8]

Source use diversity in this study is considered to be relatively

lesser rather than greater reliance on "institutional" leaders. In terms of the Indiana Senate, this means less reliance on the 13 specialists and influence oriented senators who can be considered institutional sources because of their power and centrality to the legislative process. Diversity in stories is manifested in the mentioning of more than one senator and in mentioning these senators in a diversity of legislative contexts.[9]

FINDINGS

Interaction Hypothesis 1

Reporters who perceive that editors stress audience concern and exclusives interact with all types of senators more frequently than do reporters who perceive that editors stress only mechanics. However, the proportionate reliance of audience reporters on institutional sources -- specialists and influence oriented senators -- is only slightly lower than that of mechanics reporters. (See Table I) Institutional sources make up 58 percent of the source pool of mechanics reporters compared to 54 percent for audience reporters.

Interestingly, the relatively autonomous reporters who perceive neither exclusives nor mechanics editor concerns are considerably more dependent on specialists and influence oriented senators, who make up 63 percent of their source pool. Reporters who perceive both audience and mechanics editor concerns manifest least institutional source dependence. Such sources make up only 45 percent of their source pool.

Analysis of partial correlations indicates that a greater perceived audience stress in editors is associated with reporters using other types of sources as well. The audience concern is associated with using interim committee reports (.40 correlation), statutes (.38 correlation), news releases (.26 correlation), and the news organization's morgue (.36 correlation). By contrast, the greater the perceived mechanics concern, only the more Senate floor action is relied upon (.31 correlation).

Interaction Hypothesis 2

Reporters who subscribe to the neutral or translator role show somewhat more diversity in their use of senator types than do reporters who only weakly subscribe to roles. (See Table II) Neutrals and translators tend to use specialists and policy oriented senators more frequently than do weak-role reporters. Reporters who only weakly subscribe to roles use non-typed senators most frequently. Specialists and influence oriented senators make up 56 percent of the source pools of neutrals and translators, compared to 60 percent for the weak-role reporters.

Further, the analysis of partial correlations of self-reported reliance indicates that the neutral role is associated only with the use of senator press conferences (.35 correlation), while the translator role is nonsignificantly or negatively associated with using other information sources.

Reporter Experience and Medium Type

Other influences can account for the patterns of source use found

in these data. The experience of the reporter should influence how "well connected" the reporter is. The type of medium for which the reporter works should influence basic interaction patterns.

Partitioning the sample into experienced and inexperienced reporters -- those reporters covering their first two-year session -- displays dramatically the great institutional source reliance of experienced reporters. Sixty-five percent of their source pool are specialists or influence oriented senators, compared to 46 percent for the inexperienced reporters.

But when experienced and inexperienced reporters with different perceived editorial concerns and role self-concepts are examined, it becomes apparent that a perceived editorial concern with serving audiences is the greater factor for promoting source diversity. Senate leaders make up 70 percent of the sources of experienced reporters perceiving neither mechanics nor audience editor stresses, compared to 69 percent for mechanics reporters and 61 percent for audience reporters (See Table III). Experienced neutrals and translators, however, are even more reliant on institutional leaders than are reporters who only weakly subscribe to roles. Institutional sources make up 63 percent of the source pool of neutrals, 74 percent of the source pool of translators, and 61 percent of the source pool of experienced weak-role reporters.

Medium type does as well seem to have an important effect on how these senators are used. Indeed, some 69 percent of the broadcast source pool are institutional leaders, compared to 57 percent for

the newspaper statehouse bureau reporters, 59 percent for the statehouse wire service reporters, and only 30 percent for the newspaper reporters who cover the session from their local newsrooms.

When reporters from each of these medium types are examined for the source use effects of experience, it is apparent that newspaper statehouse bureau and wire reporters go through the greatest evolution. Broadcast reporters show almost no source use change with experience, indicating that the technical considerations in that medium may dominate all others. But 67 percent of the source pool of experienced statehouse bureau print reporters are institutional sources, compared to only 47 percent for the inexperienced statehouse bureau print reporters.

Further, when experienced and inexperienced statehouse bureau print reporters are examined for the effects of perceived editorial concern, it is again apparent that a perceived editorial concern for serving audiences is associated with more diverse interaction with sources. Seventy percent of the source pool of experienced statehouse bureau print reporters who perceive no editorial audience or mechanics concerns is made up of institutional sources, compared to 66 percent for mechanics reporters and 61 percent for the experienced audience reporters. (See Table IV) And again, experienced statehouse bureau reporters who subscribe to roles have even less of a tendency to use a diversity of sources than do experienced statehouse bureau print reporters who subscribe only weakly to roles.

Story Hypothesis 1

Stories written by reporters who perceive editorial audience

concerns tend to mention more senators than stories by reporters with other perceived editorial concerns. Reporters who perceive both mechanics and audience editorial concerns used at least two senators in 82 percent of their stories, compared with 58 percent for audience only reporters, 50 percent for mechanics only reporters, and 51 percent for reporters with no perceived editorial priority.

A richer measure of diversity is the context in which individual senators are mentioned. Such contexts could range from a limited "bill advocate or opponent" portrayal in which a single senator discusses a particular bill, to contexts such as leadership, partisan politics, or general commentary on legislative or non-legislative topics. The limited bill advocate or opponent context was used for the first-mentioned senator in 49 percent of the stories of reporters who perceived no editorial concerns, in 48 percent of the stories of mechanics reporters, in 44 percent of the stories of audience only reporters, and in 37 percent of the stories of reporters who perceive both mechanics and audience editorial concerns. (See Table V)

Story Hypothesis 2

Reporter role self-concept again is less consistently associated than perceived editorial concern with more diverse source use. Translators mentioned at least two senators in 64 percent of their stories, compared to 44 percent for neutrals and 58 percent for reporters who do not subscribe to roles. Further, reporters who subscribe to the translator role used the limited bill advocate or opponent context in 34 percent of their stories, compared to 49

percent for neutrals and 46 percent for reporters who subscribe to no role.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Findings

Hypotheses about the effects on source use of perceived editorial concern were supported in this research. In general, institutional leaders are relied upon heavily by reporters, and especially so by relatively autonomous experienced reporters. The more demanding the editor is perceived to be, however, the more widely reporters search for and use sources of information. Perceived editorial concern with audience-serving stories is associated with using more diverse sources of information, and to some extent with including more diverse perspectives in stories. Perceived editorial concern with serving audiences also retards somewhat the dependence on institutional leaders that seems to develop with increasing reporter experience and autonomy. Reporter role self-concept, however, proved a much weaker influence than expected on the source use and story portrayals of statehouse reporters.

Implications for Research

Research results based on an analysis of the performance of 33 reporters must, of course, be considered tentative until replicated. Nonetheless, this study suggests that more attention needs to be given to differences in what editors and reporters expect of one another. At least this study indicates that different organizational

priorities of editors importantly affect the source searching behaviors of reporters. Differences in how their expectations are communicated and enforced, and in how reporters achieve autonomy from editorial influence, need to be explored. This study has focused on two groups of actors -- reporters and sources. Future studies should also include editors.

Obviously it is also necessary to further explore the fundamental constructs of this approach. A number of questions need to be addressed. How important is perceived editorial concern compared to the perceived concern of colleagues? How do reporters cope with cross pressures? Is role self-concept the most fruitful way of distinguishing "internal" motivation of reporters? Should a new construct be developed that better captures a sense of "mission" that might more powerfully affect a reporter's work?

Implications for Theory

This study has attempted to move beyond generalizations about relationships of reporters and sources by considering differences in the characteristics of actors that underlie interaction patterns. An examination of the news coverage of the 1982 session of the Indiana General Assembly indicates that this approach has merit. By taking into account -- even in the simplified form of this study -- both personal and institutional factors affecting actors, it is possible to illuminate differences in reporter-source interaction and the consequences those differences entail for news production. This research indicates that perceived editorial concern -- an organizational-

level variable -- is more important than individual-level role self-concept in affecting reporter independence from sources, the diversity of perspectives in stories, and thus the potential for adversary as well as cooperative relations with sources. However, another individual-level variable -- reporter experience -- and a super-organizational variable -- medium type -- also proved powerful influences on those source use and story portrayal patterns.

Considering the influences on reporter source use emanating from such different "levels" has proven a helpful analytic perspective in this research. Quite possibly a "mirror" analysis focusing on influences governing how sources use reporters would be especially helpful as well. At all events, the scope of the problems defined by this approach and suggested by the results of this research requires not just a single project but a research program extending over many individual projects. This study has attempted to identify some of the variables for that more comprehensive model of reporter-source interaction.

Implications for Practice

In general, the more reporters think that their editors stress concern for the audience and journalistic initiative, the more widely they seek sources of information and incorporate diverse perspectives in stories. Conversely, the more reporters think that editors stress newsroom production needs, or have no clear priorities, the more they confine themselves to institutional sources and routines. These findings suggest that editors should show more audience concern if news reporting is to more fully and independently inform citizens.

NOTES

1. Reporters were asked: "Thinking about the senators you might talk to during the legislative session, who are the ones you've found most useful for stories?"

Responses were obtained from all 14 newspaper statehouse bureau reporters at the Capitol, from all four wire service reporters at the Capitol, from eight of 10 of the statehouse broadcast reporters, and from eight of 12 "local" reporters from outstate Indiana newspapers selected on the basis of story reading and senator nomination.

A few reporters were sensitive to questions about sources. One of the reporters -- a statehouse veteran -- objected to talking about any of his sources, and his responses to other items were also unusuable. Two other reporters insisted on keeping some sources "confidential," although they did name others. All other reporters said after assurances of confidentiality that they felt no problem with naming senator sources.

2. Senators were asked: "Who are the reporters who come to you most frequently for information to use in stories, whether or not they actually mention your name?"

Of the 39 senators responding, 28 named at least one reporter.

3. Eight newspapers with reporters at the statehouse were purposively selected for content analysis, and another eight newspapers were randomly selected for analysis.

Stories were collected for the entire legislative session. About 600 dealt in some substantive way with either the Senate as a whole or with individual senators. About half these stories were randomly selected for content analysis.

In addition to other content categories, stories were coded so that up to 10 senators who were manifestly interviewed could be identified, thus providing an additional "check" on both the reporter and senator survey probes.

4. Six reporter scales were created for reporters on the basis of response to survey items. All Guttman scales met acceptable (.90 or above) coefficient of reproducibility standards and acceptable (.60 or above) coefficient of scalability standards. All scales consisted of three items.

The six scales tapped: perceived editor concern with newsroom mechanics; perceived editor concern with audience-serving stories; neutral role subscription; translator role subscription; representative role subscription; participant role subscription.

As an additional validity check on the perceived editorial concern scales, reporters from the same organizations were analyzed separately. This turned up some inconsistencies that can be attributed

to reporter experience. Two reporters for a statehouse bureau similarly failed to perceive any news priorities in their editor, but a third reporter -- covering the Senate for the first time -- perceived his editor as wanting exclusives. Similarly, a reporter for a wire service perceived her editor as wanting mechanics story criteria, while a colleague -- covering the Senate for the first time -- perceived both mechanics and exclusives editor concerns. A new reporter for the competing wire service also perceived her editor as wanting both mechanics and exclusives, while her more experienced colleague only perceived an editor exclusives stress.

Overall, experienced reporters from the same news organizations had similar perceptions of the concerns of the editors. Inexperienced reporters tended to misperceive (by the standards of the more experienced colleagues) editor concerns in the direction of greater demands. It seems plausible that newer reporters come to a more accurate perception of their editors' concerns.

This analysis suggests that for experienced reporters perceptions of editor concerns are more discriminating, and that for future analyses both perceptions and actual editor expectations should be measured to illuminate possibly independent effects.

A fuller discussion of these reporter scales and the items composing them can be found in Appendix I and Appendix II of the author's "News Coverage of the Indiana State Senate: An Interaction Theory Approach" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1982).

4. To create these groups, cutpoints were established for each scale. For the reporter roles, cutpoints were always the highest achieved scale values. For the editor concerns scales, cutpoints were determined by case distributions.

5. To test the interaction hypotheses, a "source-pool" was constructed for each reporter. This pool included senators the reporter named, senators who identified the reporter as at least a weekly seeker of information, and senators manifestly interviewed in stories during the session. These source pools were added together for groups of reporters defined by perceived editor concern and role self-concept.

Each reporter group was then evaluated on its reliance on various types of senators defined by specialization and political goal orientation. The different proportions of senator types in a reporter group's source pool, not the proportion of particular individual senators, is the key criterion indicating reporter group reliance on senator types.

Two criteria were established to maximize the validity of the hypothesis tests. First, reporter groups had to consist of more than a single member. Second, reporter groups had to have at least 10 source mentions. These two criteria eliminated the possibility of comparing some reporter groups when the "control" conditions were analyzed.

6. A statehouse bureau newspaper reporter subscribed to both the representative and translator roles. One wire service reporter subscribed to the representative, translator and participant roles. One wire reporter managed to score high enough on both the neutral and participant scales to be considered as subscribing to both roles. Three broadcast reporters and a local newspaper reporter subscribed to the neutral-translator role combination.

7. The same Guttman scaling techniques and criteria were used in these senator classifications as those described earlier for the reporters.

8. Reporters were asked to rank on a seven-point scale their reliance on the following sources in covering the Senate:

Print Sources: Senate journals; interim committee reports; committee minutes; printed or draft bills; formal statutes; copies of floor speeches; prepared news releases; handouts from legislators; the morgue or reference file; handouts from lobbyists; stories from other reporters.

Activity Sources: Actions on the Senate floor; Senate committee meetings; press conferences of senators; governor's press conferences;

Personal Sources: Legislative staff; lobbyists; fellow legislative reporters; governor's office; experts in executive departments or agencies.

For this analysis, partial correlation coefficients were computed between the reporter scales and reliance on each of the above sources.

9. The story analysis includes only newspaper and wire service stories, since broadcast reports could not be collected for analysis.

The following primary contexts were coded for each of up to two mentioned senators in stories: leadership; bill advocate/opponent; partisan; combination of leadership, bill advocate/opponent and partisan; corruption; impropriety; informer; interpreter; localizer; home district partisan; lifestyle; comments on non-legislative topics; ceremonial activities; amusing incidents; comments on legislative topics; appointments; accidents or illness; combination of leader and informer.

An intra-coder reliability test on 15 items for the story context for the first mentioned senator produced a Scott's Pi of .78.

REFERENCES

1. Breed, Warren. "Social Control in the Newsroom." Social Forces, May 1955.

2. Cater, Douglass. The Fourth Branch of Government. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1959.

3. Chittick, William O. State Department, Press and Pressure Groups. New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1970.

4. Cohen, Bernard C. The Press and Foreign Policy. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963.

5. Dimmick, John and Philip Coit. "Levels of Analysis in Mass Media Decision Making: A Taxonomy, Research Strategy and Illustrative Data Analysis." Communication Research, Vol. 9, No. 1, Jan. 1982, pp. 3-32.

6. Dunn, Delmer. Public Officials and the Press. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1969.

7. Dunwoody, Sharon. "Science Journalists: A Study of Factors Affecting Selection of News of a Scientific Meeting." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1978.

8. Epstein, Edward J. News from Nowhere. New York: Random House, 1973.

9. Fenno, Richard Jr. Congressmen in Committees. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1973.

10. Gans, Herbert J. Deciding What's News. New York: Pantheon Books, 1979.

11. Johnstone, John W. et. al. The News People. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976.

12. Matthews, Donald R. U.S. Senators and Their World. New York: Vintage Books, 1967.

13. Sigal, Leon V. Reporters and Officials. Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Co., 1973.

14. Torgerson, Hillard. "The Correlates of Reporter Performance and Influence: A Study of 1971 Iowa Legislative Reporters." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Iowa State University, 1974.

15. Zwier, Robert. "The Search for Information: Specialists and Non-Specialists in the U.S. House of Representatives." Legislative Studies Quarterly. 1979. pp. 31-42.

Table I: Interaction of State Senators and Legislative Reporters: Extent of Relaiance and Frequency Rank*

	Reporters							
	No Perceived Concern (N =13)		Mechanics Concern (N = 9)		Audience Concern (N = 7)		Mechanics & Audience Concern (N = 4)	
Senator Types	Pct. Ment.	Freq. Rank	Pct. Ment.	Freq. Rank	Pct. Ment.	Freq. Rank	Pct. Ment.	Freq. Rank
Specialists	24%	4.20	35%	3.88	24%	4.14	17%	4.50
Influence Oriented	39	4.12	23	3.83	30	4.13	28	4.66
Policy Oriented	11	4.25	35	3.77	11	4.50	28	3.75
Election Oriented	4	3.00	0	----	14	3.75	10	3.00
Non-Typed	22	3.77	8	3.00	22	4.25	17	3.50
Number of Type Mentions	46		26		37		29	

*5.00 = Meets daily with senator
4.00 = Meets two to three times a week
3.00 = Meets weekly with senator

TABLE II

Interaction of State Senators and Legislative Reporters with Different Role Self-Concepts: Extent of Reliance and Frequency Rank*

Reporters

Senator Types	Neutrals (N = 4) Pct. Ment.	Neutrals (N = 4) Freq. Rank	Translators (N = 9) Pct. Ment.	Translators (N = 9) Freq. Rank	No Role Self-Concept (N = 11) Pct. Ment.	No Role Self-Concept (N = 11) Freq. Rank
Specialists	28%	4.66	24%	4.00	28%	3.57
Influence Oriented	28	4.14	32	4.07	32	4.13
Policy Oriented	21	4.33	12	4.20	17	3.60
Election Oriented	7	3.00	8	4.00	9	3.00
Non-Typed	17	3.00	24	3.88	13	4.33
Number of Type Mentions	29		50		25	

*5.00 = Meets daily with senator
4.00 = Meets two to three times a week
3.00 = Meets weekly with senator

Table III: Interaction of State Senators and Experienced Reporters: Extent of Reliance and Frequency Rank

	Experienced Reporters							
	No Perceived Concern (N = 9)		Mechanics Concern (N = 5)		Audience Concern (N = 3)		Mechanics & Audience Concern (N = 2)	
Senator Types	Pct. Ment.	Freq. Rank	Pct. Ment.	Freq. Rank	Pct. Ment.	Freq. Rank	Pct. Ment.	Freq. Rank
Specialists	27%	4.22	38%	3.60	28%	4.33	--	----
Influence Oriented	43	4.28	31	4.00	33	4.00	--	----
Policy Oriented	8	4.00	21	3.66	11	4.50	--	----
Election Oriented	0	----	0	----	22	3.33	--	----
Non-Typed	22	4.00	8	3.00	6	----+	--	----
Number of Type Mentions	37		13		18		< 10 total*	

*Proportions and frequencies not computed because source mentions are fewer than 10 required

+Indicates proportions based only on stories

Table IV: Interaction of State Senators and Experienced Statehouse Bureau Print Reporters: Extent of Reliance and Frequency Rank

Experienced Statehouse Bureau Print Reporters

Senator Types	No Perceived Concern (N = 5)		Mechanics Concern (N = 4)		Audience Concern (N = 3)		Mechanics & Audience Concern (N < 2)	
	Pct. Ment.	Freq. Rank	Pct. Ment.	Freq. Rank	Pct. Ment.	Freq. Rank	Pct. Ment.	Freq. Rank
Specialists	33%	4.22	33%	3.25	28%	4.33	--	----
Influence Oriented	37	4.30	33	4.00	33	4.00	--	----
Policy Oriented	7	4.00	25	3.66	11	4.50	--	----
Election Oriented	0	----	0	----	22	3.33	--	----
Non-Typed	23	3.57	8	3.00	6	----	--	----
Number of Type Mentions	30		12		18		< 10 total	

TABLE V

Contexts Used to Describe First-Mentioned Senators in Stories by Reporters with Different Perceived Editorial Concerns (Percent of Bylined Stories)

Context	No Perceived Concern (N = 37)	Mechanics Concern (N = 50)	Audience Concern (N = 48)	Mechanics & Audience Concern (N = 60)
Leadership	14%	4%	10%	13%
Bill Advocate/ Opponent	49	48	44	37
Partisan	8	4	2	2
Leadership and Bill Advocate/ Opponent	0	4	6	2
Informer/Interpreter	8	8	6	7
Comments on Non-Legislative Topics	0	0	4	7
Comments on Legislative Topics	5	18	6	23
Other	11	2	9	2
No Senator Mentioned	5	12	13	7